Award for Excellence in Business Commentary

2015 NATIONAL ESSAY COMPETITION

MAINTAINING OUR HISTORY AND HERITAGE:
The Importance of HBCU Alumni Giving and Building a Strong Black Leadership Pipeline

This initiative is funded by The Executive Leadership Foundation, the charitable affiliate of The Executive Leadership Council, with generous support from The Coca-Cola Foundation.
BUSINESS COMMENTARY

MAINTAINING OUR HISTORY AND HERITAGE: THE IMPORTANCE OF HBCU ALUMNI GIVING AND BUILDING A STRONG BLACK LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

Background: Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) are known for providing strong educational and social support networks to educate and build character in black students. One way these institutions continue their great work towards the betterment of our community is through alumni giving. Through this giving, these educational institutions fund new curriculum and programs, and employ key resources. Unfortunately, the state of HBCU alumni giving is abysmally low compared to mainstream institutions. For example: The combined endowments to all HBCUs is less than 10% of Harvard University’s endowment.

Theme: Discuss the relevance of HBCUs today and why HBCUs are important to the black community. Create a plan and strategies to revitalize HBCU alumni giving and other funding sources. Identify key challenges and opportunities for HBCUs to implement and maintain such strategies. Also address how non-HBCU graduates can support HBCU giving.

OVERVIEW

The Executive Leadership Council’s (ELC’s) mission is to increase the number of successful black executives – domestically and internationally – by adding value to their development, leadership and philanthropic endeavors throughout the life-cycle of their careers. The Executive Leadership Foundation (ELF) is the channel through which members can assist and support students as well as educational institutions and organizations that are addressing the challenges of producing a pipeline of successful future leaders. ELF provides financial contributions in the form of scholarships and grants, and partners with organizations to improve educational outcomes of black students, champion professional development for mid-level black professionals and prepare the next generation of leaders.
Application Requirements

1) A completed application form. The enclosed confirmation form completed by the dean or department chair of the school in which the applicant is enrolled, confirming that the student is in good academic standing. The form must be emailed to 2015ELFEssay@elcinfo.com.

2) One letter of recommendation must be submitted by a current college or university faculty member, and should be emailed directly to Roxanne Caesar at 2015ELFEssay@elcinfo.com.

3) A typewritten double-spaced essay, a minimum of 2,000 and not to exceed 3,000 words. The commentary should demonstrate critical thinking, business analysis, creativity and strong communication skills. Please send the essay and the application via email to 2015ELFEssay@elcinfo.com.

4) A one or two page typed biography, including information on the applicant’s background, personal philosophy and career goals.

5) Please provide an abbreviated biography of 150 words. Please send the biography via email to 2015ELFEssay@elcinfo.com.

6) Signed “Affidavit of Eligibility/Publicity Release” form must accompany the emailed application.

7) A high-resolution, 1MB. or higher, jpeg format headshot photograph of the applicant (black & white or color) should be emailed to 2015ELFEssay@elcinfo.com.

Explicit compliance with the application requirements as outlined above is required. Incomplete and late applications will not be considered and will be returned to the applicant. To be considered, applicants must email an essay and all supporting materials to 2015ELFEssay@elcinfo.com.

Eligibility

The competition is open to Black undergraduate students in good academic standing and currently enrolled in an accredited college or university.

Selection Review Panel

- Comprised of distinguished academicians and corporate business leaders.
- Criteria for Judging Submissions:
  - Directly address the theme, and essays must be supported by a reference list or bibliography.
  - Demonstrate intellectual development, critical thinking, creative ideas and strong communication skills.
  - Comply with Chicago Manual of Style or comparable reference manual.

Scholarship Awards Package

A total of 10 winners will be selected and will receive the award package below. To receive the cash award, you must attend Honors Symposium activities from October 4-9, 2015 in New York and Washington, DC and return the attached “Affidavit of Eligibility/Publicity Release” form. Scholarship cash award prizes will be distributed in separate installments to support your academic semesters.

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TOTAL CASH AWARDS $58,000

HONORS SYMPOSIUM REQUIREMENTS

- Attendance is required in the Honors Symposium from Sunday, October 4 – Friday, October 9, 2015 in New York City and Washington, DC. All reasonable travel, hotel expenses and a stipend will be covered by The Executive Leadership Foundation.

- Attendance is required at The Executive Leadership Foundation’s Annual Recognition Gala, Thursday, October 8, 2015 in Washington, DC.

Notification

All applicants will be notified of the competition results by Friday, June 19, 2015.
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS
THIS APPLICATION MAY BE DUPLICATED

Directions: Please complete the application form at surveymonkey.com and submit the following materials to 2015ELFEssay@elcinfo.com.

Business Commentary
The 2015 topic is Maintaining Our History and Heritage: The Importance of HBCU Alumni Giving and Building a Strong Black Leadership Pipeline. The competition will focus on the importance of HBCU Alumni giving.

Letter of Recommendation
One letter of recommendation must be submitted by a current college or university faculty member, which should be emailed directly to Roxanne Caesar at 2015ELFEssay@elcinfo.com.

Dean or department chair confirmation (page 5) should be completed and sent along with the letter of recommendation.

Biography
On a separate sheet of paper, please provide a one to two page typewritten biography. Please include information on your background, personal philosophy and career goals. In addition, please provide an abbreviated biography of 150 words.

Signed Affidavit
“Affidavit of Eligibility/Publicity Release” (page 6) must be signed and returned with application materials.

High Resolution Photo
Please send high-resolution headshot photo with application to 2015ELFEssay@elcinfo.com.

Applicant’s Signature

Date

Please ensure that you have submitted a complete application:
- online application form
- confirmation form completed by the Dean
- letter of recommendation
- double spaced essay
- one or two page biography
- abbreviated biography of 150 words
- signed "Affidavit of Eligibility/Publicity Release"
- high resolution, 1MB or higher, .jpeg format headshot photograph
Directions: This form must be completed by the dean or department chair of the school in which the applicant is currently enrolled. This form confirms that the applicant is in good academic standing and must be returned along with the essay and other supporting materials on or before Friday, May 22, 2015.

Dean or Department Chair ________________________________

School/Department _______________________________________

College/University _________________________________________

Address ___________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________ Telephone __________________________ Fax ____________________________

Email ____________________________________________

I hereby confirm that _____________________________ Student Applicant

is in good academic standing at ___________________________ College/University

Majoring in ___________________________________________

Signature of Dean/Department Chair _________________________

Date _______________________________________________

For additional information, please contact The Executive Leadership Council at 703-706-5285 or email program manager Roxanne Caesar at 2015ELFEssay@elcinfo.com.

THIS APPLICATION MAY BE DUPLICATED.
AFFIDAVIT OF ELIGIBILITY/PUBLICITY RELEASE

I represent and warrant to The Executive Leadership Foundation the following information is true and accurate as of the date hereof:

1. I am a citizen or legal resident of the United States. I am over the age of majority in my state of residence and I am able to contract in my own name.

2. I represent that I have read and have complied with the official rules and guidelines of the Competition and I meet all of the criteria for eligibility in the Competition. I have perpetrated no fraud or deception in claiming my prize.

3. I acknowledge and agree that I am responsible for any taxes that may become due because of my winning a prize in the Competition.

4. My contributions to the entry are my sole and original work and the entry does not infringe the copyright or other property right of any person. I further represent and warrant that the Entry is not libelous or obscene or contain any material I know to be false or without reasonable basis.

5. In consideration of my being awarded one of the monetary prizes awarded by The Executive Leadership Foundation in the Competition, I hereby grant to The Executive Leadership Foundation the non-exclusive right and license to reproduce, distribute, and publish my Entry, in whole or in part, and as may be edited, modified, added to or subtracted from by The Executive Leadership Foundation in its sole discretion, and with such title and illustrations, if any, as The Executive Leadership Foundation may choose, in any and all media of any kind, now or hereafter known, provided that I am given credit as author. Except for the license set forth herein, I shall retain all right, title and interest in and to the Entry, including the copyright therein, but I recognize that I shall have no right to use the trademarks and logos of The Executive Leadership Foundation other than to merely identify myself as one of the authors of a prize Entry in the Competition. Neither I nor my heirs shall claim any damages of any kind due to any inadvertent failure to grant me author’s credit in connection with the reproduction, distribution or publication of the Entry.

6. I agree to return to The Executive Leadership Foundation any prize money which may be awarded to me if any statement made by me in this affidavit is false.

7. I further grant The Executive Leadership Foundation the right to use my name, likeness and biographical data concerning me in connection with authorship of the Entry and in promotion of the Competition in future years. I acknowledge that all rights granted to The Executive Leadership Foundation hereunder may be sublicensed by The Executive Leadership Foundation.

8. I attest that I have read and understand all the foregoing provisions of this affidavit and agree to be bound by all of them. I have every legal right to enter into this agreement.

________________________________________
Print Name

________________________________________
Signature

________________________________________
Date
GIVE YOURSELF A COMPETITIVE EDGE

Here are a few helpful hints for students applying to The Executive Leadership Foundation’s 2015 Award for Excellence in Business Commentary National Essay Competition:

**Begin Early**
Start researching and writing now! Don’t wait until the last minute. Thoughtfully gather necessary signatures and letters of reference that you need from university/department officials. Keep copies of your essay and supporting documents.

**Proofread**
Re-read your essay and supporting documents before submitting them. Have someone else read and review your essay and accompanying materials for accuracy and content.

**Follow Directions**
Failure to follow directions can diminish your chances of scoring high. Pay close attention to content, word count (a minimum of 2,000 words and not to exceed 3,000 words) and deadlines. Essays must be typed and address the given topic. Also, essays must be supported by a bibliography and comply with the *Chicago Manual of Style* or comparable reference manual. If you have questions about the process or the requirements, please contact Roxanne Caesar, program manager, at (703) 706-5285 or by email: 2015ELFEssay@elcinfo.com.

**EMAIL SUBMISSION:**
**ON OR BEFORE FRIDAY, MAY 22, 2015**

THIS APPLICATION MAY BE DUPLICATED

The Executive Leadership Foundation 2015 Award for Excellence in Business Commentary National Essay Competition and Honors Symposium is underwritten by The Coca-Cola Foundation